

I teach political science to college students and it decisions by media, like this one by Sinclair, that make it very difficult for me to argue to my students that we live in a democracy. The media is intended to be a place where the truth will emerge, to paraphrase Thomas Jefferson, and Sinclair's actions make it highly unlikely that this will occur.

Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. But when large companies control the airwaves, we get more of what's good for the bottom line and less of what we need for our democracy. Instead of something produced at "News Central" far away, it's more important that we see real people from our own communities and more substantive news about issues that matter.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard. Thank you.